



**NOAA - National Weather Service**

**Tampa Bay Area**

**2525 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE, Ruskin, Florida 33570**

**813-645-2323**

**<http://weather.gov/tampa>**

## Hurricane Season 2011 Half Time Report

The 2011 hurricane season has been very active so far, and was nearly keeping pace with the record breaking 2005 season until just recently. Through September 20<sup>th</sup>, there have been 15 depressions, 14 of which became tropical storms, with 3 of those becoming hurricanes (2 of them major). You can see in the table below that we are only 3 systems behind the 2005 season, but the 2005 season had stronger tropical systems than our 2011 season has so far.

	Through September 20 <sup>th</sup> 2011	Through September 20 <sup>th</sup> 2005
Tropical Depressions	15	18
Tropical Storms	14	17
Hurricanes	3	10
Major Hurricanes (Category 3 or higher)	2	5

Much like stocks, past performance does not guarantee future results. There is no way to know for sure if this year will remain active right through November 30<sup>th</sup> or suddenly come to a crawl for the duration of the season.

So now that we are more than half way through the hurricane season, we can all breathe a sigh of relief, right? Well, maybe not yet.



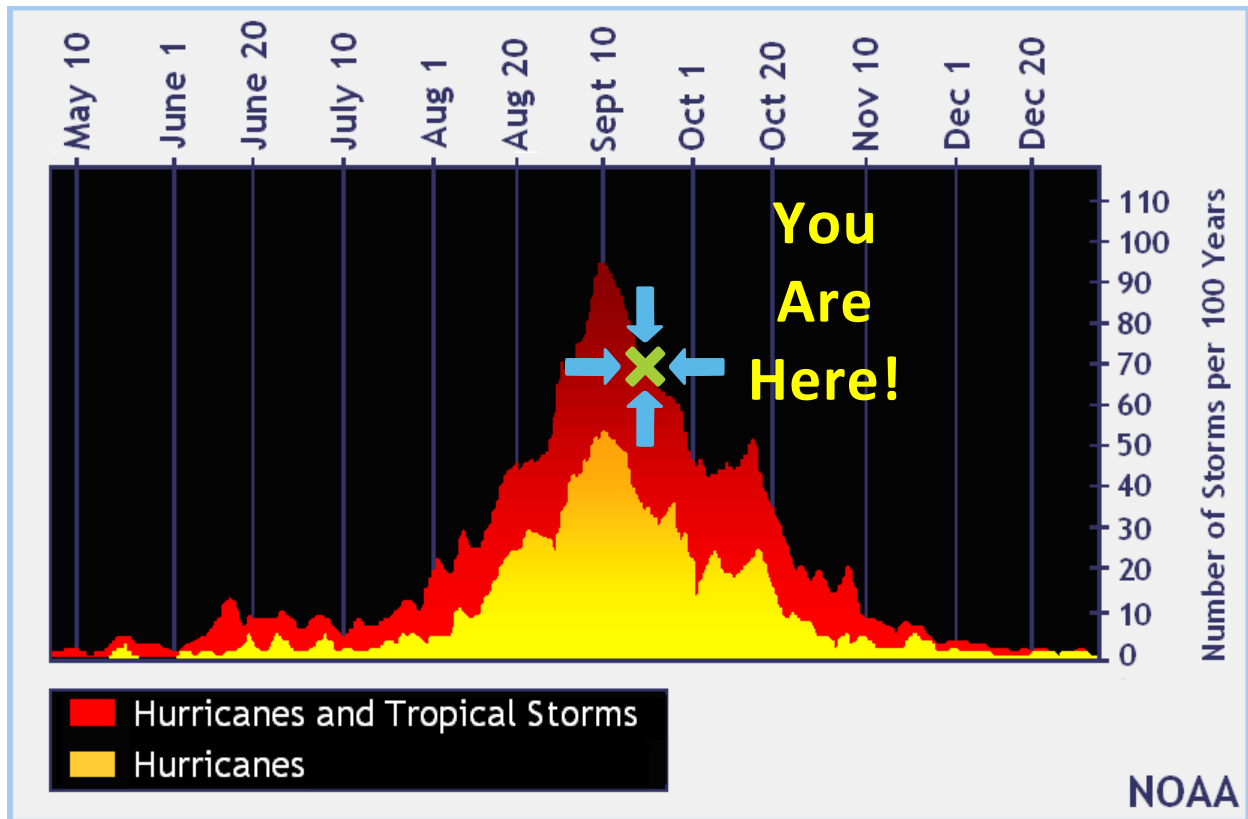
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Hurricane Season, on average, peaks around September 10<sup>th</sup> of each year. That means we can expect fewer storms to develop as we head deeper into the season. But while having fewer storms to worry about may be comforting, it is important to remember that it only takes one to change your life forever.

As the hurricane season passes middle age and begins its trek downhill, the spawning grounds of these tropical nemeses moves closer to Florida. Storms developing in the Western Caribbean or Gulf of Mexico have a better chance of visiting the sunshine state than those that are born in the far Eastern Atlantic.



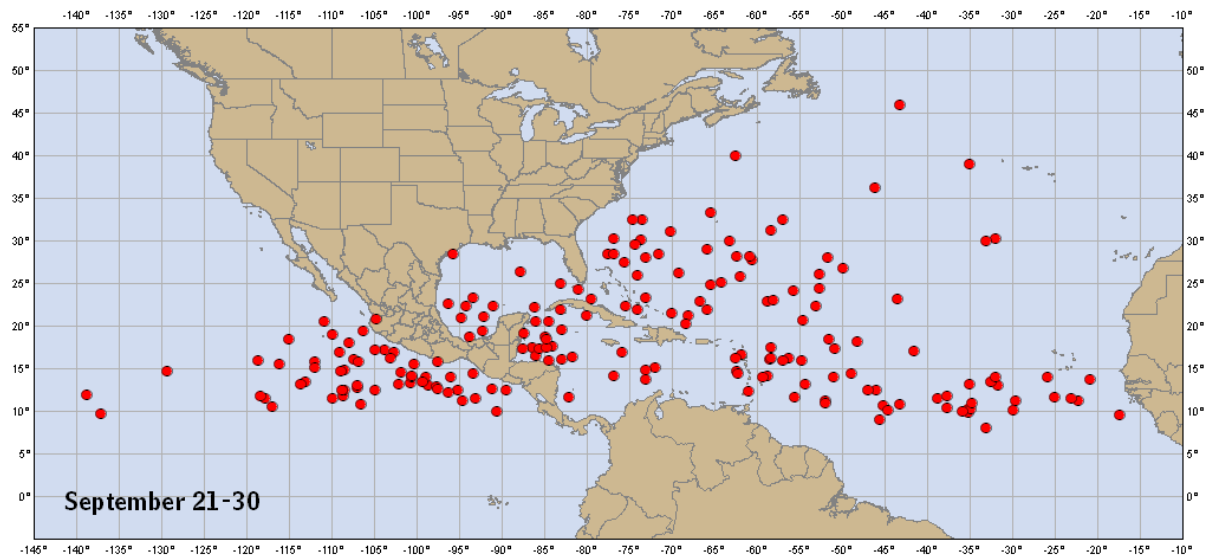
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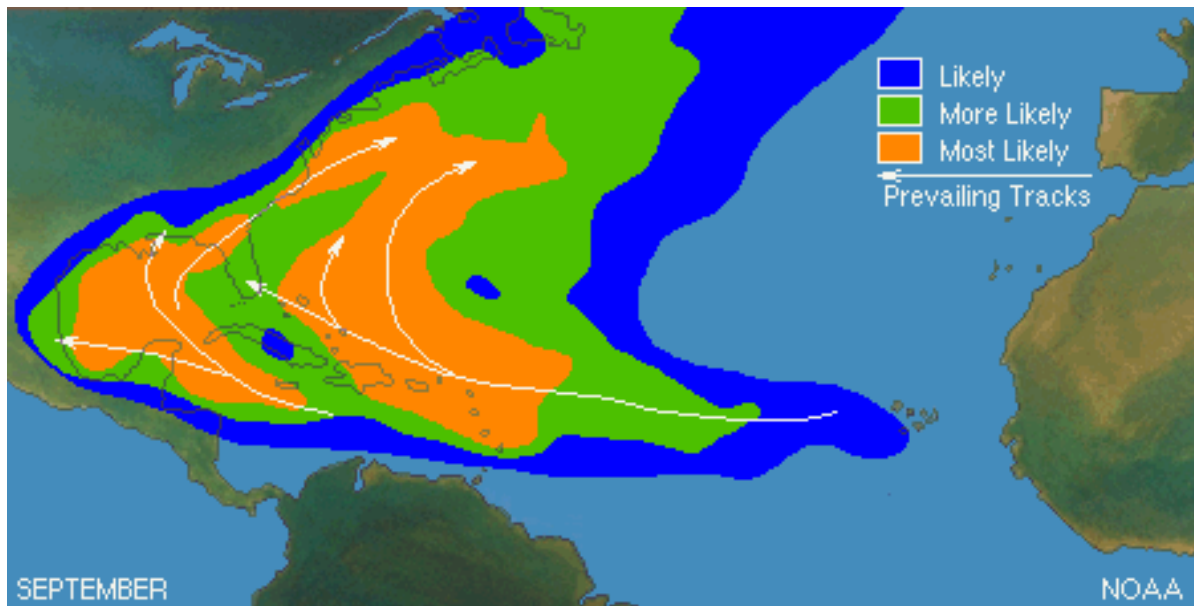
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As seen in the image above, during the final weeks of September, the spawning points for tropical cyclones are spread out evenly between the Eastern Atlantic and the Gulf of Mexico.



Storms that develop far to our east have a tendency to curve out into the North Atlantic. Storms that develop in the Caribbean Sea tend to move toward the Western or Northern Gulf Coast.



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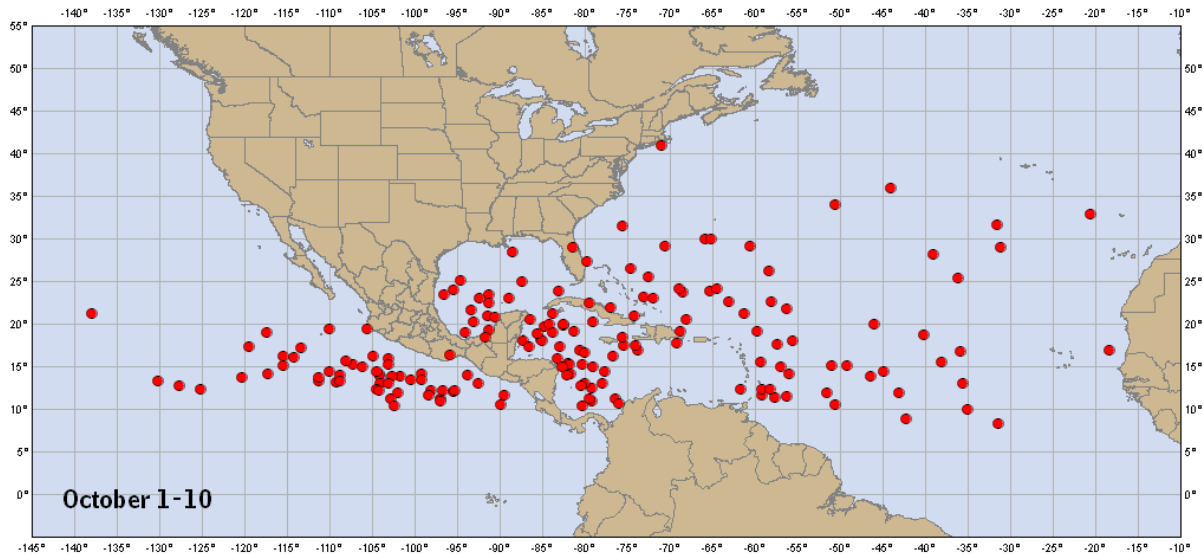
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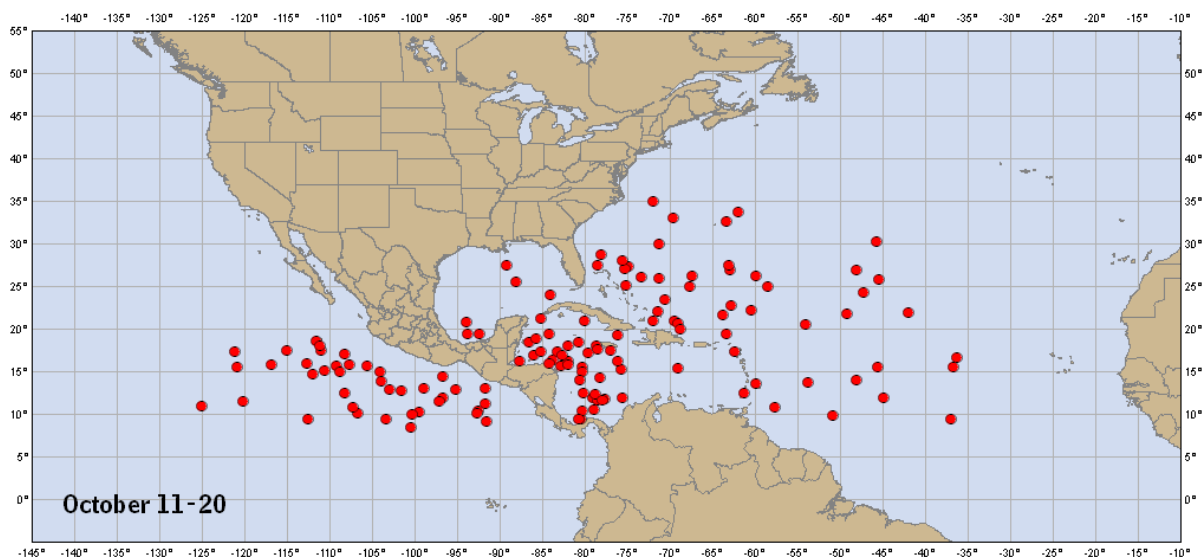
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But look what happens as we advance into October...



Notice how we have fewer points over the Eastern Atlantic and a higher concentration of points in the Western Caribbean Sea. So while fewer storms tend to develop in October, the ones that do develop have a better chance of impacting our weather.



As we move into the middle of October, we see very few Cape Verde storms, with most systems developing in the Western Caribbean south of Cuba. So where do these tropical cyclones tend to go?



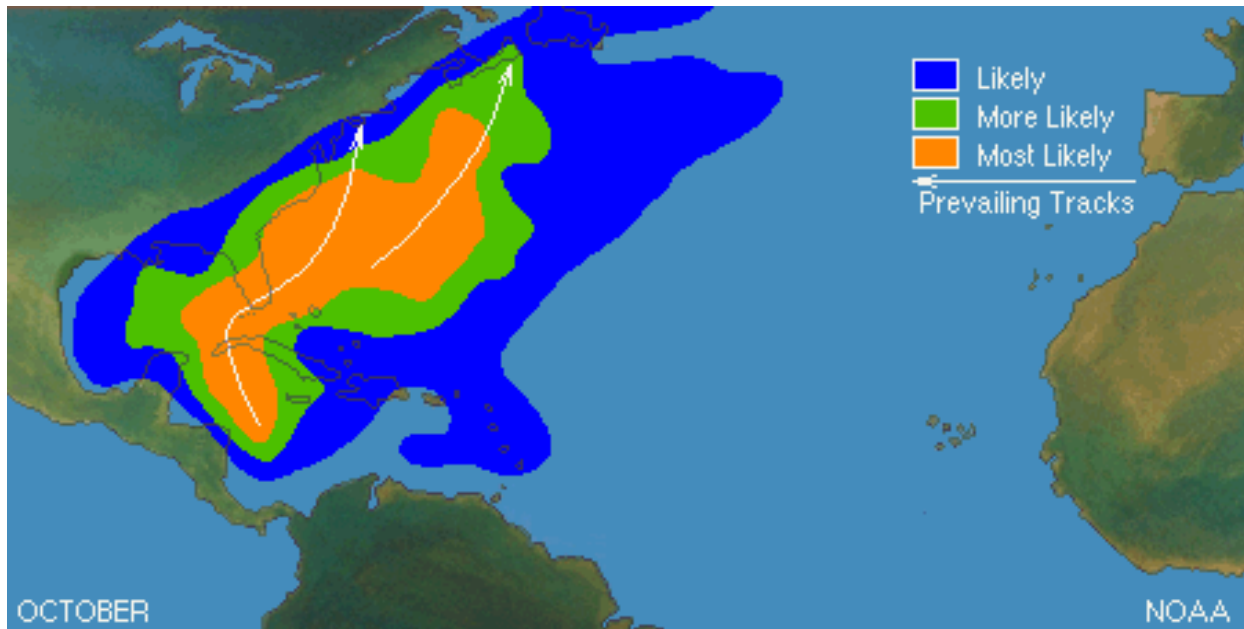
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Notice how the southern half of Florida is now in the orange area, the most likely track for storms originating in the Western Caribbean Sea. Climatologically, October storms are the ones that give us the most trouble.

The 1921 Tampa Bay Hurricane was an October storm that reached a peak intensity of 140 mph on October 24<sup>th</sup>, and eventually made landfall as a category 3 hurricane with 115 mph winds near Tarpon Springs on October 25<sup>th</sup>.

